

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00
FBOE-00 CIAE-00 HEW-06 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 HA-05
CA-01 SCS-06 ICA-20 EB-08 A-01 OPR-02 INT-05
/168 W

-----105987 121222Z /53

P R 121103Z JUL 78
FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2961
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION GENEVA
SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
JCS WASHDC
USCINCEUR
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

UNCLAS THESSALONIKI 0194

GENEVA PASS UNDRO

E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS: EAID, GR
SUBJECT: EARTHQUAKE SITREP NO. 14

REF: THESSALONIKI 0189

1. SITUATION HAS CHANGED LITTLE SINCE REFTEL
SITREP SUBMITTED JULY 7. VAST MAJORITY OF
THESSALONIANS PREFER TO LIVE AWAY FROM THEIR
DWELLINGS. NORMAL CITY LIFE RESUMES EACH MORN-
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ING UNPIL EARLY AFTERNOON WHEN TOWN BEGINS
EMPTYING OF ITS INHABITANTS. LARGER FIRMS ARE
FUNCTIONING NORMALLY, BUT SMALLER INDUSTRIES, WHICH
EMPLOYEE MOSTLY WOMEN, ARE HAVING DIFFICULTIES IN
FINDING HELP WILLING TO WORK IN MULTI-STORY
BUILDINGS. DURING 30- HOUR PERIOD ENDING LAST
MIDNIGHT THERE WAS A TREMOR WHICH REGISTERED 4

ON THE RICHTER SCALE, PLUS FOUR OTHERS REGISTERING BETWEEN 3 AND 4. CITIZENS ARE NOW BRACING THEMSELVES FOR AN EXPECTED LARGE TREMOR ON JULY 20 WHEN FULL MOON WILL OCCUR. MANY PLAN TO BE ABSENT FROM CITY THAT DAY, AND THERE ARE REPORTS THAT A NUMBER OF FACTORIES AND BUSINESSES WILL CLOSE DOWN. MEANWHILE, PRESS REPORTS THAT U.S. SEISMOLOGISTS HERE TO MONITOR RECORDING EQUIPMENT STATED THAT THERE IS NO REASON FOR UNEASINESS SINCE PATTERN OF AFTERSHOCKS IS FOLLOWING NORMAL PROFILE. PRESS ALSO REPORTS THAT SENATOR SARBANES IS REQUESTING THAT U.S. SPECIALIST IN LASER BEAM SEISMOLOGY BE SENT TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL DATA ON SERIES OF QUAKES NORTHERN GREECE IS NOW EXPERIENCING.

2. PASOK LEADER ANDREAS PAPANDREOU VISITED THESSALONIKI YESTERDAY, JULY 11, FOR FIRST TIME SINCE QUAKES BEGAN AND USED THE OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT,. HE SAID THAT ONLY A SMALL OUTLAY WOULD HAVE BEEN NECESSARY TO ENFORCE MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT ALL CONSTRUCTION IN THIS EARTHQUAKE-PRONE AREA WAS CAPABLE OF WITHSTANDING STRONG TREMORS. HE ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO COMPREHEND WHY EMERGENCY PLANS HAD NOT BEEN FORMULATED IN AN AREA KNOWN TO HAVE

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FREQUENT TREMORS. FOLLOWING THIS THE MINISTRY OF NORTHERN GREECE CRITICIZED THOSE WHO WERE MISLEADING PUBLIC OPINION AND CAUSING CONFUSION IN THIS AREA.

3. AT A GENERAL MEETING YESTERDAY CHAIRED BY THE NOMARCH ALL ASPECTS OF THE RECENT CRISIS WERE REVIEWED. THE NOMARCH STATED THAT 500 MILLION DRACHMA IN SPECIAL LOANS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING WITHIN 15 DAYS. DURING THE MEETING , INTER ALIA, SPEAKERS NOTED THAT PRICES HAD NOT RISEN SUBSTANTIALLY SINCE THE QUAKE, THAT RENTS WERE BEING FROZEN BUT THAT THE DANGER OF INFLATION FROM A HEAVY DRAWDOWN OF EMERGENCY LOANS WAS A REAL THREAT. WORKERS IN GREAT DEMAND , SUCH AS CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, ARE ASKING AND GETTING TWO TO THREE TIMES THEIR NORMAL WAGES. IT WAS ALSO MENTIONED THAT A MAJOR EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT BOTH THE UNIVERSITY AND ALL OTHER SCHOOLS OPEN AS SCHEDULED AND THAT FALL EXAMINATIONS BE HELD AS SCHEDULED. THE MOST SERIOUS LONG-RANGE PROBLEM IS THAT OF ACCOMMODATING APPROXIMATELY 40,000 THESSALONIANS

IN NEW HOUSING OR TEMPORARY HOUSING UNTIL BASIC
REPAIRS ARE CARRIED OUT. THE NOMARCH POINTED
OUT THAT THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 12,000
CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN THE THESSALONIKI AREA
BUT THAT 40,000 WORKERS WILL BE NEEDED IMMEDIATELY
TO BEGIN A MASSIVE RECONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR
PROGRAM FOR WHICH FUNDS WILL BE SHORTLY
AVAILABLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SITREP, EARTHQUAKES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978THESSA00194
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780285-0404
Format: TEL
From: THESSALONIKI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780767/aaaacema.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c4cc7e76-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AID
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 THESSALONIKI 189
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2029307
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EARTHQUAKE SITREP NO. 14
TAGS: EAID, GR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbs://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c4cc7e76-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014